

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH ORGANISATION

NEWSLETTER



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National Crops Resources Research Institute



Inside this Edition



Titus Alicai
appointed Director,
NaCRRI,



Hundreds of farmers benefit
from NARO-COFIA training
in Tororo and Uganda and
Lesotho strengthen ties.



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MANDATE

Coordinating, overseeing and guiding agricultural research in Uganda".

VISION

A competitive society supported by a dynamic agricultural research innovation system

MISSION

To innovate for sustainable agricultural transformation

GOAL

To increase total factor productivity and access to agricultural research products and services for inclusive growth

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Director NaCRRI's Welcome Remarks



Dear Community,

Happy New year! I am thrilled to welcome you to this edition of our newsletter, where we celebrate the incredible milestones we've achieved together in the last 6 months and look ahead to the exciting opportunities on the horizon.

As we kick off 2025, I want to take a moment to reflect on the strength of our shared vision and the remarkable dedication of our team, partners, and stakeholders. It's because of your unwavering commitment that we continue to innovate, grow, and make a meaningful impact in the Country.

In this issue, you'll find stories that highlight our research work, such as projects, new initiatives, and partnerships, updates on staff and institutional capacity developments. These accomplishments are a testament to the hard work and collaboration that define our culture. As we move forward, let's remain focused on our organizational goals or values, such

as innovation, food and nutrition security, stakeholder engagements, sustainability, or strategic collaborations. Together, we can continue to break boundaries and set new standards of excellence.

Thank you for being an integral part of our journey. I encourage you to stay connected, share your feedback, and join us in celebrating the successes we achieve as one united team.

Here's to another chapter of growth, learning, and impact.

Warm regards,
Dr. Titus Alicai,
Director of Research NaCRRI.

Dr. Titus Alicai Appointed as New Director of NaCRRI: A New Chapter in Leadership - Cover story



On August 1, 2024, Dr. Titus Alicai was officially appointed as the new Director of the National Crops Resources Research Institute (NaCRRI) for a five-year term. He succeeds Dr. Godfrey Asea, who served as Director for nine years, leaving behind a legacy of significant achievements.

The official handover ceremony, a historic moment for NaCRRI, was held in the Cereals Conference Hall and presided over by Dr. Yona Baguma, the Director General of the National Agricultural Research Organization (NARO). The event began with prayers, setting a reflective and hopeful tone for the leadership transition.

In his remarks, Dr. Yona Baguma underscored the importance of leadership transitions in fostering institutional growth and prosperity. He urged Dr. Alicai to prioritize good governance, transparency, and accountability to ensure the institute's continued success.

"You must ensure total accountability, engage stakeholders, adopt better digital data applications, and foster teamwork," Dr. Baguma emphasized. He also encouraged the new director to empower staff, facilitate

efficient operations, and build stronger collaborations to redefine NaCRRI's role in shaping Uganda's agricultural future.

Outgoing Director Dr. Godfrey Asea reflected on his nearly decade-long tenure, highlighting key accomplishments, including building partnerships, advancing crop technologies, and spearheading infrastructural development.

"I leave the directorship in capable hands and have no doubt that the next chapter will be even more remarkable," Dr. Asea said in his farewell speech, concluding with best wishes for Dr. Alicai's leadership.

In his acceptance speech, Dr. Titus Alicai expressed gratitude for the appointment and laid out his vision growth and innovation for NaCRRI. He pledged to build on the strong foundation established by his predecessor while focusing on innovation, sustainability, and continued growth.

"It is an honor to step into this role. I am committed to driving NaCRRI toward even greater success while upholding the values that have guided us thus far," he affirmed.

The ceremony was also graced by Dr. Anton Bua, a retired Senior Principal Researcher who served at NaCRRI for over 30 years. Dr. Bua shared his reflections as a Veteran on the institute's evolution, recalling its growth from its early stages to its current stature.

"I have witnessed many milestones under past leaderships. I pray that the new leadership strives for excellence through teamwork, resource mobilization, and a shared commitment to progress," he said, expressing optimism for the future.

The event was attended by NaCRRI staff, the Chairperson of the Advisory Committee, and members of NARO's top management team, a united vision for the Future. The occasion symbolized a shared commitment to advancing agricultural research and innovation in Uganda, with stakeholders united in their support for the institute's continued success. As Dr. Alicai takes the helm, NaCRRI embarks on a new chapter of leadership, poised to achieve even greater milestones in agricultural development and research excellence.

Section 1

Research and Development Updates



Vice President Unveils Two New Bean Varieties at World Food Day 2024 Celebrations

The Vice President of Uganda, Major (Rtd) Jessica Alupo, presided over the launch of two new bean varieties and three groundnut varieties during the 2024 World Food Day (WFD) celebrations held on October 16th at the National Semi-Arid Resources Research Institute (NaSARRI) in Serere District. The event was held under the theme "Right to Food for a Better Life and a Better Future," emphasizing the importance of food security and access to nutritious food for all Ugandans.

In her keynote address, the Vice President underscored the critical role of food in improving the quality of life and building a prosperous, food-secure future. She urged farmers to adopt the newly released bean varieties—NABE 14 CR (a bush variety) and NABE 12C (a climbing variety)—to boost bean production, enhance nutrition, and improve household economic security. The VP also emphasized the need to promote sustainable and affordable food systems, address the challenges posed by climate change, and ensure access to nutritious food for all.

Highlighting the benefits of beans, the Vice President noted that they are highly nutritious, rich in protein, an excellent source of fiber, and affordable, making them an essential part of the diet for many households. She encouraged

Ugandans to incorporate beans into their daily meals as they are not only accessible but also versatile for various recipes.

The Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry, and Fisheries, Hon. Frank Tumwebaze, commended the National Agricultural Research Organization (NARO) for its efforts in developing fast-maturing and high-yielding crop varieties aligned with climate-smart agriculture. He emphasized the pivotal role of agriculture in Uganda's national development and praised NARO's commitment to advancing research that supports farmers and enhances food security.

Dr. Yona Baguma, the Director General of NARO, highlighted the organization's achievements since its inception in 1992, including the development of over 1,000 crop varieties. However, he also pointed out existing challenges such as limited staffing and inadequate infrastructure for research, which need to be addressed to sustain and expand agricultural innovation.

The launch of these new crop varieties is expected to contribute significantly to Uganda's efforts to improve agricultural productivity, adapt to climate change, and ensure food and nutritional security for its citizens.



Perennial rice research commences in Uganda- NaCRRI to becomes rice centre of excellence.



On October 21, 2024, the National Agricultural Research Organisation (NARO), through its National Crops Resources Research Institute (NaCRRI), launched the Perennial Rice Project for Africa in partnership with the Government of the People's Republic of China. Hosted at NaCRRI, the initiative aims to revolutionize rice production in Africa by promoting sustainable and innovative farming practices.

The event, held at NaCRRI, featured the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between NARO and the Chinese government. High-profile attendees included the Chinese Ambassador to Uganda, the Chinese Ambassador to the African Union, the CEO of BGI (Beijing Genomics Institute), Uganda's Minister of Agriculture, and senior NARO leadership, including the Director General and all PARI directors.

Speaking at the event, the Director General of NARO, Dr. Yona Baguma, described the initiative as a turning point for African agriculture.

"The Perennial Rice Project will not only enhance rice productivity but also provide long-term solutions to challenges like labor costs and environmental degradation. This collaboration is a testament to the power of partnerships in addressing global food security challenges," he said.

The CEO of BGI, Dr. Wang Jian, echoed the sentiment, emphasizing the transformative potential of the project.

"Perennial rice is a game-changer. It reduces production costs, preserves soil health, and boosts yields. We at BGI are proud to support this initiative and work alongside NARO to bring this innovation to Africa," he stated.

The Chinese Ambassador to Uganda, H.E. Zhang Lizhong, praised the partnership, saying, "This collaboration reflects the deepening ties between China and Uganda. Together, we are leveraging science and technology to build resilient agricultural systems and improve livelihoods."

In addition to the rice project, the Chinese delegation pledged continued support for NARO's broader agricultural initiatives, reinforcing their shared commitment to fostering innovation and sustainability in Africa.

The ground-breaking ceremony for the construction of the **Rice Centre of Excellence** was also held on this momentous day. This centre is set to play a transformative role in advancing agricultural research, fostering innovation, and driving development, particularly in rice production. As a crop and a vital source of food and income for millions of people globally, rice holds immense importance, and the establishment of this center will ensure significant progress in addressing challenges, improving productivity, and enhancing livelihoods across rice-growing



Breeding Component of Crops Resources Research Enhanced



Breeding remains a cornerstone of agricultural research, necessitating robust staffing, state-of-the-art equipment, and modern infrastructure to maximize its impact. The Global Breeding Resources Initiative under One CGIAR, with support from the Crop to End Hunger (CtEH) initiative, has been collaborating with the National Crops Resources Research Institute (NaCRRI) in Namulonge and the National Semi-Arid Crop Resources Research Institute (NaSARRI) in Serere. This partnership has integrated these institutions into global breeding networks to enhance their breeding capabilities and outputs.

As part of this collaboration, site assessments were conducted to identify opportunities for upgrading breeding infrastructure and operations. These improvements include shared facilities for National and CGIAR partners, making NaCRRI and NaSARRI two of 15 sites in Sub-Saharan Africa selected for such upgrades. Investments have been directed toward modernizing breeding infrastructure, including internet upgrades for enhanced digitization, advanced farm machinery for mechanized plot management, irrigation systems, seed processing equipment, and cold storage facilities with backup solar power.

A significant milestone in this collaboration was marked by the handover of completed facilities and equipment to the National Agricultural Research Organization (NARO) by Gustavo Teixeira of the CGIAR Breeding Resources Program. Dr. Stevens Kisaka, Director of Corporate Services at NARO, received the equipment on behalf of the Director General. He emphasized that these investments aim to centralize and streamline breeding operations, improve plot management for greater heritability, reduce operational costs, enhance data quality through digitization, and boost overall breeding efficiency.

Staff from the respective institutes will be trained in the use and maintenance of these new facilities, ensuring their sustainability and optimal functionality. These resources will be jointly utilized by NARO, the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), and the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), fostering a collaborative approach to improving breeding services and advancing agricultural research in Uganda and beyond.

Section 2

Capacity Building



Farmers in Eastern Uganda Trained on Fall Armyworm Identification and Management

The Cereals Program has been conducting targeted field demonstrations in Namutumba and Bukedea districts to equip farmers with the skills needed to identify and manage Fall Armyworm (*Spodoptera frugiperda*). These efforts, part of the Integrated Management of Fall Armyworm for Sustainable Food Security in Africa project, focused on promoting integrated pest management (IPM) practices to enhance maize production and protect yields from the destructive pest.

The primary objectives of the training sessions were to: conduct field days demonstrating integrated FAW management techniques, highlight the use and benefits of bio-pesticides in managing FAW and gather farmer feedback on the performance of promoted technologies.

Through farmer field days, participants observed maize demonstration plots showcasing the application of various synthetic and bio-pesticides. These demonstrations provided hands-on learning opportunities, followed by interactive question-and-answer sessions where farmers shared their experiences and discussed practical solutions for FAW management.

The training sessions brought together a diverse group of stakeholders, including: A total of 369

farmers from various farmer groups participated and 14 Agro-Input Dealers dealers attended, gaining insights into sustainable pest control solutions, Local Government representatives and NARO Staff and Local Leaders.

Farmers appreciated the opportunity to see firsthand the effects of different pesticides on maize crops and learn about sustainable pest control techniques. The sessions emphasized the importance of early FAW identification and the adoption of IPM practices, including: Using natural predators to manage FAW populations (Biological control agents), monitoring and reducing FAW infestations (Pheromone traps) and minimizing overuse and reducing environmental and health risks (Targeted pesticide use)

The field days were supported by partners, including KAFACI_FAW and CBFAMFEWS, and highlighted the potential of collaborative efforts in combating FAW. By equipping farmers with the tools and knowledge to manage this pest, these initiatives are contributing to sustainable agriculture, improved livelihoods, and strengthened food security in Eastern Uganda.

Transforming Lives: NaCRRI Empowers Youth and Women in Agriculture with Hands-On Training.



The National Crops Resources Research Institute (NaCRRI) recently hosted a transformative three-day training program designed to empower youth and women from Oyam and Sironko districts. The initiative, held at NaCRRI's headquarters, aimed to equip participants with practical skills in cultivating bio-fortified beans—a crop celebrated for its nutritional and economic benefits.

Dr. Pamela, the Legumes Program Leader, inaugurated the training with an inspiring address, highlighting the critical role of bio-fortified beans in improving both livelihoods and community health.

"Our mission is to bridge knowledge gaps and provide you with practical skills that drive economic empowerment and sustainable agricultural practices," she remarked. "By cultivating bio-fortified beans, you're not only enhancing your income but also contributing to the nutrition and well-being of your communities."

The program culminated in a field visit to "Omutima Gwa Ruhiira Farmers" in Isingiro

District, where participants witnessed the transformative impact of bio-fortified bean cultivation. Host farmers shared success stories, crediting NaCRRI's training and support for their improved quality of life. The visit provided participants with practical insights and a renewed sense of purpose.

Sarah, a participant from Oyam, expressed her enthusiasm, saying, "Seeing how bio-fortified beans have changed lives here in Isingiro has inspired me. I'm eager to apply this knowledge in my community."

John from Sironko echoed her sentiments, adding, "This training has been a game-changer. I now feel equipped to make better farming decisions and support my family."

This initiative underscores NaCRRI's unwavering commitment to advancing agricultural knowledge and fostering sustainable development in rural communities. By empowering young and female farmers, NaCRRI continues to play a pivotal role in strengthening Uganda's agricultural sector and driving transformative change.

TECHNOLOGY PROMOTION AND OUTREACH ACTIVITIES:

Over 800 Farmers Empowered at NARO-COFIA Training in Tororo



The 3rd Annual Grassroots Agricultural Exposition, held from July 3rd to 5th, 2024, at the COFIA Demonstration and Training Centre in Peta Pakai, Tororo District, empowered over 800 farmers with transformative agricultural knowledge and practices. Organized by the Community Farmers Integrated Agriculture (COFIA) in partnership with the National Agricultural Research Organization (NARO), the event focused on equipping local farmers with innovative techniques to boost productivity, profitability, and sustainability in farming.

The NARO- COFIA Uganda collaboration is a platform for innovation and growth. Under the theme "Building the Next Generation of Smallholder Farmers with Innovative Technologies and Practices," the exposition offered practical training in diverse agricultural sectors, including root crops like cassava and potatoes, cereals such as maize and rice, horticulture, livestock, fish farming, soybeans, and groundnuts. Farmers participated in hands-on workshops and demonstrations led by NARO experts, focusing on climate-smart practices, high-yielding crop varieties, and sustainable farming techniques.

Dr. Nasser from NARO emphasized the critical role of partnerships in agricultural development.

"Events like this bridge the gap between research, stakeholders, and farmers. By involving farmers in practical agri-innovation, we can combat food insecurity and promote climate-resilient farming," he said.

COFIA co-founder Mr. Godwin Othieno celebrated the event's success in empowering farmers to transition from subsistence farming to commercial agriculture.

"This event is making a big difference, giving farmers the knowledge and tools they need to improve their lives. It's about going beyond having enough to eat and turning farming into real businesses," Othieno said.

The exposition proved to be a vital platform for knowledge sharing, fostering collaboration, and inspiring smallholder farmers to embrace innovative farming practices that transform agriculture into a sustainable and profitable enterprise.

Farmers Share Success Stories:

Wilbrod Okongo, a 35-year-old farmer from Pekai Sub-County, shared how the training revolutionized his rice farming.



"Before, I grew rice just for my family's consumption. Through this training, I started growing NARO Rice 1, which yielded much more. Now, I plan to expand and generate more income," he said.

Similarly, Catherine Akoth, a cassava and sweet potato farmer, highlighted the impact of adopting clean planting materials and good agronomic practices introduced by NARO.



"Learning innovative farming techniques has significantly boosted my yields and income," she said.



NaCRRI and Eco-PRiDe Complete Transformative Rice Training Program for Refugee Trainers



Trainees posing with their certificate after completion

The National Crops Resources Research Institute (NaCRRI), in partnership with Eco-PRiDe, has successfully concluded a three-day Training of Trainers program focused on improving rice farming practices in the West Nile region. Held at NaCRRI from October 30th to November 1st, 2024, the training was part of the UNHCR-Rice initiative aimed at promoting sustainable agriculture and enhancing self-reliance among refugee and host communities.

The program brought together 22 participants, including farmers and extension workers from Yumbe, Kiboko, Terogi, and Madi Okollo districts, selected under Action Against Hunger's market-oriented agricultural production project. Participants received hands-on training on essential rice farming techniques, including paddy and upland rice cultivation, best practices for harvesting and threshing, pest and disease management, water requirements, and the safe use of agrochemicals. Additionally, the training covered post-harvest handling

methods to improve produce quality and reduce losses.

Through this initiative, NaCRRI and Eco-PRiDe aim to empower participants with practical knowledge to boost rice yields, enhance food security, and create economic opportunities in the region. Speaking at the program's conclusion, Ms. Annet Nakayima, a representative from NaCRRI, highlighted the importance of equipping refugee and host communities with sustainable agricultural skills to foster long-term livelihoods.

The trained participants are now expected to disseminate the knowledge and skills gained to their respective communities, driving improvements in agricultural productivity and self-reliance. NaCRRI remains committed to collaborating with partners to deliver impactful programs that contribute to both national and regional development.

NARO and IAEA Join Forces for Training on Mutation Breeding in Crop Improvement



In a groundbreaking initiative to bolster global food security and drive agricultural innovation, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) partnered with the National Agricultural Research Organisation (NARO) to conduct a five-day training workshop on mutation breeding for crop improvement. Held at the National Crops Resources Research Institute (NaCRRI) from August 26 to 30, 2024, the workshop aimed to enhance the capacity of plant breeders in utilizing mutation-assisted breeding techniques to develop resilient crop varieties.

Dr. John Odipio, co-Principal Investigator of the CPR project, outlined the primary objective of the training which is to empowering Breeders with Advanced Techniques.

“This workshop aims to equip participants with in-depth knowledge of mutation breeding, a method that uses radiation to induce genetic variation for developing improved crop varieties. Attendees will explore key areas such as the basic principles of mutation breeding, data collection and analysis techniques, and efficiency-enhancing technologies that accelerate the delivery of mutant crop varieties,” he said.

The training brought together plant breeders and researchers from various institutions, providing them with hands-on experience and insights into the potential of mutation breeding to address agricultural challenges.

Speaking at the opening ceremony, Dr. Emmanuel Yaw Owusu, the lead trainer from IAEA, gave a global perspective on Agricultural Challenges and emphasized the critical role of mutation breeding in tackling global agricultural issues such as climate change, pest resistance, and declining crop yields.

“This training equips breeders with cutting-edge skills to develop resilient crops that can withstand the challenges of our rapidly changing environment,” he remarked.

Participants were also introduced to advanced technologies designed to streamline the mutation breeding process, enabling faster development and deployment of improved crop varieties. These advancements are particularly vital for developing countries, where food security remains a critical concern.

As the workshop concluded on August 30, participants left empowered with a vision for the future with the knowledge and tools needed to implement mutation breeding techniques in their respective research programs. This training is expected to have far-reaching impacts, benefiting farmers and consumers worldwide by improving crop productivity, resilience, and sustainability.

The collaboration between NARO and IAEA underscores the importance of leveraging science and innovation to create a more secure and sustainable agricultural future.

NARO Conducts Fall Armyworm Training at the 30th National Agricultural Show 2024



The 30th National Agricultural Show of 2024 was a pivotal event for Uganda's agricultural sector, showcasing innovative technologies and solutions to shape the future of farming. Themed "Innovating Pathways to Farm Business-Led Agro-Industrialization," the event emphasized the sector's progress in advancing agricultural practices and driving agro-industrial growth across the country.

Speaking at the event, the Rt. Hon. Rwamirama Bright Kanyontore, Minister of State for Agriculture, Animal Industry, and Fisheries (MAAIF), highlighted the urgent need for efficiency across all stages of agricultural production.

"To produce efficiently, we need clean planting materials and a focus on every level of production. Inefficiencies have previously led to a 40% loss in production. We must adopt science and technology to reduce post-harvest losses and improve outcomes," he stated.

The National Agricultural Research Organization (NARO) played a key role at the show, with a dedicated team training over 700 farmers and participants who visited their exhibit. The training focused on agronomic best practices, including the management and control of Fall Armyworm (FAW), a critical threat to food security. NARO emphasized the adoption of clean, accessible, and sustainable technologies to drive growth across all farming sectors.

Dr. Otim Micheal the Principle Investigator NaCRRI emphasized the importance of keeping farmers informed and aware of FAW, its effect on maize production and sustainable mitigation measures to manage it.

Dr. Sadik Kassim, NARO's Deputy Director General, underscored the importance of food security and commercialization, particularly in the face of climate change.

"Our ultimate goal is to increase jobs and promote value addition. This platform allows us to share knowledge and continue working toward a sustainable future," he said.

Dr. Aidha, President of the Uganda National Farmers Federation (UNFFE), echoed the importance of innovation and agro-industrialization to maintain the competitiveness of Uganda's agricultural sector.

"Agriculture has always been the backbone of our country. To remain competitive, we must embrace sustainable practices, technological advancements, and empower youth and women to transform the sector. This platform fosters knowledge sharing, value addition, and collaborative innovation," she remarked.

The show served as a vital hub for collaboration, learning, and inspiration, aligning stakeholders toward a shared vision of a resilient and prosperous agricultural future.

NaCRRI Showcases Climate-Smart Technologies and Indigenous Food Solutions at UAPA-FNS & EAPA-FNS Conference



On November 29, 2024, the National Agricultural Research Organisation (NARO) hosted a delegation of parliamentarians from 10 East African nations, including Burundi, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda. The delegation was part of the Uganda Parliamentary Alliance on Food and Nutrition Security (UAPA-FNS) and East African Parliamentary Alliance on Food and Nutrition Security (EAPA-FNS) conference, under the theme, "Fostering Healthy Diets for All." This focuses on promoting nutrition and climate-resilient indigenous foods across the region.

NARO organised an exhibition for the delegation in which NaCRRI showcased a range of climate-smart agricultural technologies and indigenous food solutions, emphasizing the importance of preserving and promoting

forgotten native crops. The institute's research in crop diversification, drought-resistant varieties, and sustainable farming practices highlighted the role of indigenous foods in fostering food security and improving nutrition in East Africa.

The delegation that included key policymakers and food security experts, also featured discussions on the role of governments in promoting nutritious diets and the importance of partnerships to address the challenges of malnutrition and climate change.

NaCRRI's participation underscores its commitment to fostering sustainable agricultural practices and supporting regional efforts to improve nutrition and food security. By showcasing these climate-smart solutions, NaCRRI continues to lead the way in research and advocacy for healthier diets in East Africa.

NARO educates the Next Generation of Innovators at the 3rd National Agricultural Education Show



The National Agricultural Research Organisation (NARO) participated in the 3rd National Agricultural Education Show, held from June 24th to June 29th, 2024, at the Jinja Showgrounds. The event brought together exhibitors from across the country to showcase transformative agricultural technologies under the theme, "Young Innovations, Transforming Agriculture for National Prosperity." Organized by the Uganda National Farmers Federation (UNFFE) and its partners, the show emphasized the vital role of youth in driving agricultural innovation and economic growth.

Engaging the Youth for a Prosperous Future

Mr. Nelson Tukundane, the UNFFE Communications Officer, underscored the importance of youth participation in agriculture, noting their significant demographic presence in Uganda.

"With young people making up 75% of Uganda's population, it is crucial to involve them in agriculture. They need to learn innovative practices and appreciate the sector's contribution to our GDP," he said.

Echoing these sentiments, Dr. Kassim Sadik, Deputy Director General of NARO, highlighted the value of the agricultural show as a platform for learning and innovation.

"This event offers a unique opportunity for participants to acquire hands-on knowledge

and skills from experts while exploring advancements in agriculture," he stated.

Dr. Sadik also emphasized NARO's role in addressing key agricultural challenges, showcasing innovations such as climate-smart technologies and high-yielding crop varieties designed to combat food insecurity and boost Uganda's economic development.

NARO's presence at the show was marked by interactive and impactful exhibits, including: demo plots, value addition processes and climate-smart solutions. These demonstrations were tailored to engage young participants, equipping them with practical skills and knowledge to transform agriculture into a viable and sustainable career path.

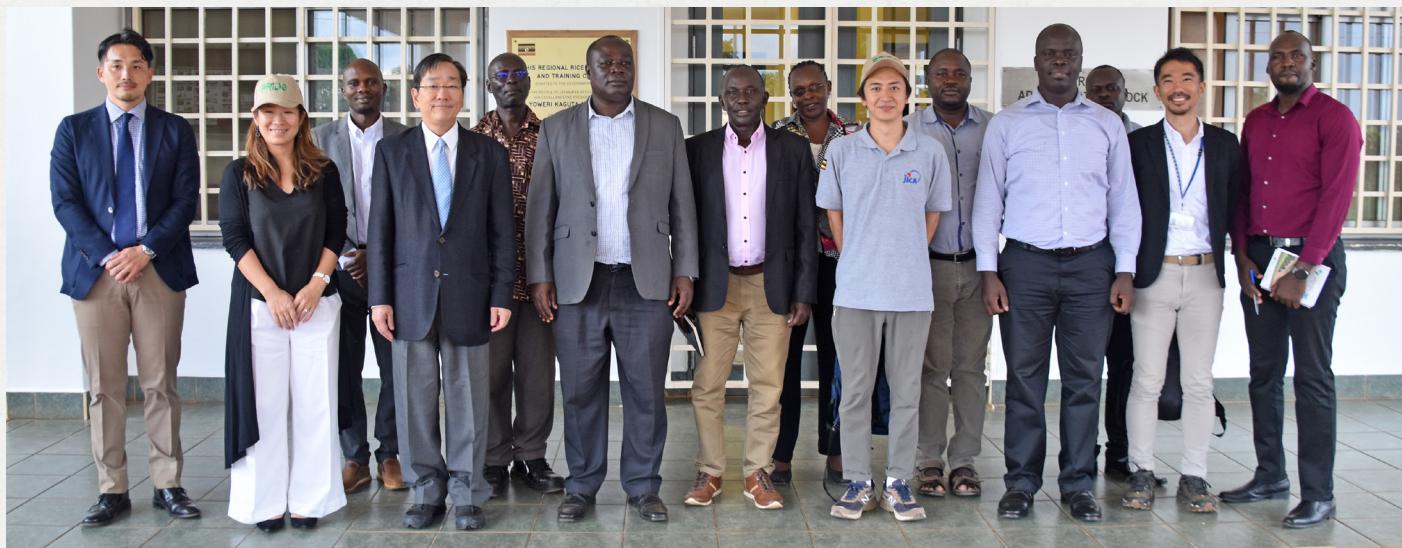
The event attracted students from various educational levels, reinforcing its importance as a learning platform for youth. By providing insights into modern agricultural practices, the show aimed to inspire a new generation of agricultural innovators who can contribute to Uganda's economy and sustainability.

As the third iteration of the National Agricultural Education Show, the event continued to solidify its role as a cornerstone for fostering agricultural knowledge, innovation, and youth engagement. NARO's contributions underscored the critical link between research, innovation, and the nation's agricultural prosperity.

Partnerships and collaborations:

- Japan Ambassador to Uganda Visits NaCRRI to Oversee Ongoing Rice Research
- Uganda and Lesotho Strengthen Ties through Agricultural Collaboration
- NaCRRI Hosts National Defence College Uganda for Insightful Tour on Agricultural Innovation.
- Eritrean Delegation Explores Crop Improvement and Agricultural Resilience at NaCRRI
- PSC commission visit to NARO - October
- Kumi District Leaders Visit NaCRRI for Study Tour on Agricultural Innovations

Japan Ambassador to Uganda Visits NaCRRI to Assess Progress in Rice Research



His Excellency Sasayama Tukaya, the Japanese Ambassador to Uganda, recently visited the National Crops Resources Research Institute (NaCRRI) to review advancements in rice research and training initiatives aimed at addressing food insecurity in Uganda. The visit underscored the ongoing collaboration between the Government of Japan, through the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), and Uganda under the Japan Pride Project Two, which focuses on enhancing rice production capacity.

During the visit, Ambassador

Sasayama toured NaCRRI's state-of-the-art research facilities and demonstration fields. He observed innovative rice cultivation techniques, including mechanized harvesting solutions, which are critical for improving post-harvest handling and boosting the livelihoods of Ugandan farmers. His presence highlighted the vital role of international partnerships in advancing agricultural innovation and development.

At a presentation held in the institute's training hall, Ambassador Sasayama expressed optimism about the progress of the collaborative

research efforts.

"I am looking forward to successful research outcomes with NARO. It is gratifying that when I visit the supermarket, I can now purchase rice grown in Uganda," he remarked, emphasizing the tangible benefits of the partnership between Japan and Uganda.

Dr. Godfrey Asea, Director of NaCRRI, expressed his gratitude for Japan's support.

"We are deeply honored to host His Excellency Ambassador Sasayama. Japan's contribution through the Japan Pride Project Two has been instrumental

in advancing our research and training programs. This collaboration not only enhances rice yields but also equips our farmers with the skills necessary for sustainable agricultural practices," he said.

Dr. Asea also highlighted the strides made in capacity building under the project.

"Previously, we had very few rice breeders, but now, thanks to this partnership, we have many, and they have received training in Japan," he noted.

This increase in trained breeders underscores the success of the initiative in empowering local talent and fostering expertise in rice cultivation.

The Japan Pride Project Two focuses on agricultural research and capacity building for extension workers and farmers, ensuring a stable food supply and enhancing resilience to climate change and other challenges.

Ambassador Sasayama praised the progress made at NaCRRI and reaffirmed Japan's commitment to supporting Uganda's agricultural sector.

"The advancements in rice research and training at NaCRRI are truly impressive. Japan is proud to contribute to these efforts to improve food security and support Uganda's hardworking farmers. We look forward to continuing this fruitful partnership and achieving even greater milestones together," he stated.

The visit served as a testament to the strong ties between Japan and Uganda and their shared commitment to fostering agricultural development and innovation.



Uganda and Lesotho Forge Stronger Ties Through Agricultural Collaboration



On August 14, 2024, Uganda hosted the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Lesotho, Rt. Hon. Sam Matekane, at the National Agricultural Research Laboratory (NARL) in Kawanda, marking a significant milestone in strengthening bilateral relations between the two nations. The visit focused on fostering collaboration in the agricultural sector, an area identified as having immense potential for mutual growth and development.

Prime Minister Matekane highlighted the importance of unity in addressing shared challenges in agriculture, emphasizing the broader benefits of the partnership.

"This collaboration is not just about increasing agricultural output; it's about fostering unity and mutual growth. Together, we can tackle common challenges and explore new avenues for sustainable agricultural development," he said.

The Prime Minister expressed optimism about the partnership, particularly in leveraging Uganda's advanced agricultural research capabilities, providing opportunities for Knowledge Sharing and Innovation.

"Lesotho has much to gain from NARO's advanced laboratories, including training opportunities for our people and the adoption of climate-smart technologies like bananas, which have struggled to grow in our country," he stated.

Dr. Yona Baguma, Director General of the National Agricultural Research Organization (NARO), echoed the sentiment, emphasizing the potential for knowledge exchange between the two nations.

"At NARO, we have made significant strides in agricultural research, particularly in developing resilient crop varieties and value addition. Our team of world-class scientists and breeders is eager to share these advancements with our brothers and sisters in Lesotho while also learning from their experiences," Dr. Baguma remarked.

The visit included an exhibition of NARO's cutting-edge agricultural technologies, showcasing value addition techniques for potatoes, cassava, maize, rice, and palm oil, as well as new high-yield bean varieties. These innovations underscored the potential for collaboration in agribusiness, particularly in developing value-added products for industries and exports.

The partnership between Uganda and Lesotho aims to create synergies that will drive agricultural productivity, improve food security, and contribute to Africa's broader development goals. This collaboration represents a shared vision for leveraging agricultural innovation to uplift communities and strengthen ties between African nations.

NaCRRI Hosts National Defence College staff for an Insightful Tour on Agricultural Innovation



The National Crops Resources Research Institute (NaCRRI) proudly welcomed the National Defence College Uganda (NDC-U) for an exclusive tour of its facilities on November 29, 2024. The visit brought together senior officers from Uganda's defense sector to explore the groundbreaking agricultural research driving sustainable development and food security in the country. This engagement underscored the vital role of agricultural innovation in fostering national resilience and self-reliance.

Dr. Benard Yada, representing NaCRRI's Research Director, guided the delegation through the institute's cutting-edge programs, showcasing advancements in climate-smart agriculture, crop productivity, and post-harvest solutions. He highlighted the critical intersection of agriculture and national security, stating, "As

we advance research at NaCRRI, we are not just improving crops but also contributing to the broader vision of a resilient and self-reliant Uganda. Innovation in agriculture is integral to the nation's stability and prosperity." The NDC-U officers commended NaCRRI's efforts, particularly in climate resilience and food security, recognizing the transformative role of science and technology in strengthening Uganda's future.

The visit also emphasized NaCRRI's alignment with national priorities, such as reducing dependence on imports and ensuring food security. This collaboration between defense and agriculture sectors exemplifies Uganda's holistic approach to sustainable development, leveraging innovation to address shared challenges and build a stronger, more prosperous nation.

Eritrean Delegation Explores Crop Improvement and Agricultural Resilience at NaCRRI



On November 18, 2024, a delegation from Eritrea, led by Mr. Kiflu Ephraim, head of finance and administration in the Ministry of Agriculture, visited the National Agricultural Research Organisation (NARO) – National Crops Resources Research Institute (NaCRRI) to explore the institute's pioneering research in crop improvement and agricultural resilience.

This visit was part of a two-week tour across several NARO institutes, aimed at learning from Uganda's innovative agricultural practices and research programs. The Eritrean team was welcomed by NARO's senior leadership, including NaCRRI's Research Director, represented by Dr Gabriel Ddamulira, who guided the delegation through the institute's various research facilities.

They visited NaCRRI's molecular and product development laboratories, sweet potato crossing block and rice cultivation fields. The team gained firsthand insight into NaCRRI's work on developing climate-resilient crops, enhancing soil health, and improving crop productivity in

the face of environmental challenges.

Dr Ddamulira highlighted the importance of collaboration in addressing common agricultural challenges suited to both Uganda's and East Africa's diverse agricultural systems.

"By sharing knowledge and learning from one another, we can strengthen our collective efforts to improve food security, enhance crop resilience, and build sustainable farming systems across Africa. "We are pleased to host the Eritrean delegation and look forward to further collaboration," he stated.

Mr Kiflu, expressed their appreciation for NARO's innovative approaches to crop improvement and resilience.

"We greatly appreciate NARO's innovative approaches to crop improvement and resilience. "The strategies employed here have the potential to significantly enhance agricultural productivity in Eritrea," remarked Kiflu.

NaCRRI Showcases Innovative Agricultural Technologies to Public Service Commission



The National Crops Resources Research Institute (NaCRRI) recently hosted officials from the Public Service Commission for an exhibition showcasing its pioneering agricultural technologies and products. The delegation was led by Dr. Bernard Yada, who represented the Director of NaCRRI during this significant event.

Dr. Yada took the officials through a comprehensive tour of NaCRRI's exhibits, highlighting the institute's dedication to addressing pressing agricultural challenges through innovation. Each exhibition stall demonstrated NaCRRI's commitment to creating sustainable agricultural solutions that improve productivity, enhance food security, and benefit the livelihoods of Ugandan farmers. The products showcased advanced crop varieties, disease-resistant seeds, and sustainable farming practices tailored to the country's specific agricultural needs.

The permanent secretary ministry of Public Service, Catherine Bitarakwate Musingwiire was pleased by NARO' innovations and expressed enthusiasm for the institute's impact on the agricultural sector.

"We are impressed by NaCRRI's advancements in addressing critical agricultural issues, and our team is ready to step in and provide technical staff for functional analysis, so we can break down these issues and tackle the most critical ones first," the Commissioner remarked.

During the tour, Dr. Yada highlighted NaCRRI's important role in advancing Uganda's agricultural sector by developing and sharing technologies that help farmers address challenges like climate change, pests, and diseases. The exhibits also showcased NaCRRI's commitment to value addition, featuring products and techniques aimed at improving the quality and marketability of Ugandan agricultural goods.

Kumi District Leaders Explore Agricultural Innovations at NaCRRI



On December 4th, 2024, a delegation of political leaders from Kumi District, led by District Speaker Mr. David Tupei, visited the National Crops Resources Research Institute (NaCRRI) for a study tour focused on agricultural innovations. The group was warmly received by NaCRRI's Research Director, Dr. Titus Alicai, and Dr. Pamela, who guided them through the institute's advanced crop production systems and cutting-edge laboratories, including the molecular and product development units.

Speaking on behalf of the delegation, Mr. Tupei highlighted Kumi District's commitment to adopting modern agricultural practices to benefit farmers and boost local economies.

"We are here to witness firsthand the groundbreaking research being conducted at NaCRRI. As leaders, we understand that embracing innovation is key to improving food security and enhancing livelihoods in our communities. We look forward to translating this knowledge into practical solutions for our farmers," he stated.

Dr. Pamela Paparu- Programme Leader Legumes, who led the delegation on a guided tour of NaCRRI, expressed her enthusiasm

about the opportunity to showcase NaCRRI's work.

"It was an honor to host the Kumi District delegation. At NaCRRI, we are dedicated to advancing agricultural science, particularly in crop production systems that enhance yields and sustainability. We hope the insights gained here will empower Kumi District to adopt transformative agricultural practices," she remarked.

The tour included an in-depth exploration of NaCRRI's state-of-the-art laboratories, where pioneering research is being conducted in crop genetics, pest management, and climate resilience. The delegation was particularly impressed by NaCRRI's efforts to develop high-yield, climate-adapted crop varieties that address the challenges faced by farmers in Uganda.

The visit underscores NaCRRI's commitment to fostering collaboration with local communities and leaders to drive agricultural innovation. By sharing knowledge and expertise, NaCRRI aims to support sustainable development, enhance food security, and strengthen agricultural practices at the district level and beyond.

Staff / Human Resource Updates

New Appointments:

- John Odipio

Promotions:

- Agnes Imalingant from Senior Procurement Officer
- Charles Ssengendo from Senior HR to Principle Human Resource

Transfers:

- Charles Sengendo- Transferred from NaCRRI to NARL
- Henry Wagaba from NaCRRI to NaCORI
- Arnold from NaCRRI to NaCRRI W
- Kannabi Micheal NaCRRI to NaCORI
- Violet Achieng

Graduations:

- Leah Nadudu- Phd

Publications:

Upcoming events and announcements:

- Launch of AG Biome Project- 22nd-25th January 2025
- CAADP- 9th-11th January 2025
- Africa Potato Association Conference- May 2025
- Harvest Money Expo- 14th – 16th February 2025
- Eastern Region Agricultural Expo, Awoja, Soroti. Feb – March 1st 2025



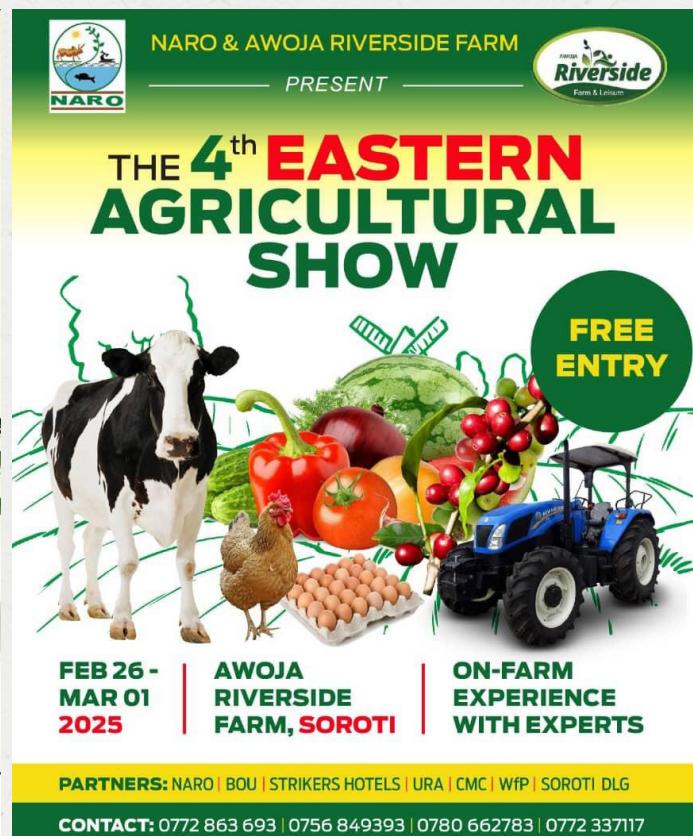
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Theme: FARMING AS A BUSINESS
Value addition and cooperatives

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Pictorial







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